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Giraffe's death blamed on cold

LANGLEY One of two giraffes that died at a Langley, B.C., animal sanctuary last month succumbed to a combination of cold and an inappropriate diet, according to the necropsy, which was made public yesterday.

The adult Masai giraffe died at the Mountain View Conservation and Breeding Centre during a cold snap in early December.

"It's outrageous that tropical animals died in an unheated barn in freezing temperatures," said Peter Fricker, a spokesperson for the Vancouver Human Society (VHS).

"Mountain View only installed heat under orders from the B.C. SPCA after the giraffes were dead. Their callous excuse that heat hadn't been an issue before is unacceptable."

The B.C. SPCA is investigating whether animal cruelty charges should be laid.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO CANADA

News on the Move
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• Today — Doughty heating up on the ice, page 10
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Winterlude **Let it snow**

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Lionel Gauthier, a worker at Ski Mont Saint-Bruno, makes snow at Gatineau's Jacques-Cartier Park in preparation for the 32nd annual Winterlude festivities next month. Six snow-making machines have been running 24 hours a day to create 32,000 cubic metres of snow for giant snow slides and for use in the snow-sculpting contest.

Watson to enter race

MPP expected to announce bid for mayor's chair

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

"It's going to be fun."

That's what Bay Ward Coun. Alex Cullen, already a candidate for mayor, said of the prospect of Ottawa West-Nepean MPP Jim Watson stepping into the race.

After months of speculation, Watson is releasing a statement this morning "regarding his political future," a press release stated. He is expected to announce his intention to run for mayor. Watson served as mayor of Ottawa in 1997.

"What voters will have to find out is, 'What does Jim Watson stand for?'"
Coun. Alex Cullen

If Watson does enter the race, he'll be a major player, said Cullen.

"What voters will have to find out is, 'What does Jim Watson stand for?'" he said.

Cullen said people should look at the choices Watson is offering in terms of rapid transit, sewage into the river and other city services.

Watson would be the second provincial cabinet minister to move into municipal politics. Former deputy premier George Smitherman is registered to run in Toronto.

After a difficult year for the provincial Liberals with OLG, eHealth and the HST, it appears as if high profile Grits are jumping a sinking ship, said Ottawa Nepean Carleton MPP Lisa MacLeod, who has been pressing Watson for weeks at Queen's Park to reveal whether or not he would run for mayor.

"He's going to make a decision based on his own self-interest and not the best interest of the city," said MacLeod. "Otherwise, he would have done that for taxpayers earlier in terms of communicating his ambitions to the public."

Last week, Watson told Metro Ottawa people have been encouraging him to run for mayor.

"It's evident that there are challenges that emanate from the budget process, transportation and environmental issues," he said recently.

WITH FILES FROM TRACEY TONG

Economists, budget watchdog at odds with finance minister

The country's budget watchdog and some of Canada's leading economists are contradicting Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, saying he cannot balance the country's books without raising taxes or slashing spending.

Parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page warned yesterday the country could be headed back to the financial bad days of the 1970s and 1980s when the country was crippled by public debt.

"We are going to have to take drastic measures, either spending reduction or tax increase, to get us back to balances," said Page, known for his outspoken assessment of government spending.

Page said Ottawa doesn't appear to have any fiscal targets in mind "and that's not a good place to be."

Flaherty repeated his assertion yesterday Ottawa can over time balance its books without having to raise taxes or cut spending. Instead, Flaherty says savings can be achieved simply by keeping the increases in annual spending on federal programs from growing as fast (3.3 per cent annually) as they have in recent years.

But economists doubt the government could slow the growth in program spending enough to curb the deficit; set to reach a cumulative $164 billion by 2014, without tax increases.

"That's pretty serious restraint," said Toronto analyst Dale Orr. "I don't think they could persevere with that in a minority government." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive is only available to customers who take delivery between January 12, 2010 and March 1, 2010. GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers offer may not be combined with certain other incentives available on GM vehicles, including the 60 Day Satisfaction Guarantee. See your participating GM dealer for additional program conditions and details. Residents of Northwest Territories, Yukon or Nunavut are excluded from the Government's Retire Your Ride program and are therefore ineligible for GM Canada's Cash For Clunkers incentive. Some conditions apply. Visit www.retireyourride.ca for more information.*

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Local

Whet your appetite for Taste of Winterlude

The long-awaited menus for Winterlude's popular food event are now online at winterlude.gc.ca/taste. From Jan. 28 to Feb. 21, some of the city's best restaurants will be offering exclusive prix-fixe menus, fine dining experiences and wine pairings for the Taste of Winterlude. In its fifth year, the program showcases some of the region's top restaurants while encouraging residents and visitors to support local businesses. METRO OTTAWA

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News in brief

SPEEDING A 22-year-old Ottawa man faces stunt driving and speeding charges following an incident Saturday. Ottawa OPP said yesterday that officers stopped a 2003 silver Honda after clocking a vehicle travelling at 165 km/h in a 100 km/h zone on Hwy. 417 near Parkdale Avenue. Police seized a man's licence for seven days and impounded his vehicle for seven days. Bradley Angelo faces charges under the stunt driving and speeding sections of the Highway Traffic Act. He will appear in traffic court at a later date. METRO OTTAWA

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Wait's on for start of Canal's 40th

NCC 'not speculating' on skateway's opening after 'unpredictable' weather

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

Temperatures have plummeted of late and National Capital Commission workers could be seen flooding the ice on the world's largest skating rink over the weekend.

But there's still a ways to go before skaters can take to the Rideau Canal Skateway, an NCC spokesperson said yesterday.

"The weather has been quite unpredictable," said Jasmine Leduc, referring to the balmy days the nation's capital received around Christmas. "In December, we had temperatures above zero and at zero, which slowed down the process.

"We're not speculating about whether the ice is ready."

When the ice finally opens, it will mark the 40th skating season for the skateway, which measures 7.8 kilometres long and 165,621 square metres.

Last weekend, the NCC did intense flooding on a 4.3-kilometre stretch of the ice surface between the National Arts Centre and the Bank Street Bridge "in order to maximize the ice growth," Leduc said.

Workers are also continuing to clear the snow — which acts as a thermal blanket for the ice surface — for that same reason.

Today, workers will also be out testing the thickness of the ice, which needs to be 30 centimetres thick before it is opened for skating. This takes 14 days of cold weather with temperatures of -15 C degrees, excluding windshield factors.

On average, the skateway opens during the first couple of weeks in January, Leduc said. Last year it opened on New Year's Day.

The earliest opening day was Dec. 18, 1981, while the latest opening was Feb. 2, 2002.

Ice conditions

- A daily update on ice conditions is available on the NCC website or by calling 613-239-5234.

DeHooge ready for challenges

It's his first day on the job and Ottawa's new fire chief is already looking forward to retirement.

Creating a leadership team that could take his place after he leaves will be one of the top priorities for 53-year-old John deHooge during his tenure in charge of Ottawa Fire Services, he said yesterday.

"Leading a team that is well equipped to take over whenever I retire is first and foremost one of the most important tasks at hand," he said.

The new chief joins Ottawa Fire Services from Waterloo. He is not bilingual, but is learning French. It's just one of the many challenges he's looking forward to over the next few years.

"I think with any fire service, you're competing for municipal dollars with police and EMS. In a time of economic recession, it makes it that much harder to get the dollars to provide the level of service that we think is appropriate," he said. "Those challenges have always been there and they will continue to be there."

After meeting with senior staff, deHooge said one of his first jobs will be to work on the department's strategic plan to map out the next few years of the fire service and have those needs be approved by city council.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

New Ottawa fire Chief John deHooge, 53, had his first day on the job yesterday. The new chief joins Ottawa Fire Services from Waterloo.

Aboriginal youth need to know own history: Chief

It is important that aboriginal students learn their true history, insists Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse.

"The history that has been captured and is being presented to students in many of the provincial school systems and universities doesn't reflect the true First Nations history," said Toulouse yesterday at the opening event of Aboriginal Awareness Week at Carleton University. "It's just nowhere near what our real history is."

Toulouse said young people need to know about the treaties that were signed between their nations and the Canadian government. He said the treaties were about sharing the land and resources, but to this day, they have not seen the kind of sharing agreed upon. People also need to know about the Indian Act, which dictates the lives of First Nations people, said Toulouse.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Awareness week

- Many of the speakers this week are touching on serious issues facing Aboriginal Peoples, but there is also the sharing of aboriginal culture, said organizer Sheila Grantham, the aboriginal liaison with the Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education.

Housing starts soar at year's end

After a sluggish start to 2009 due to the global economic recession, Ottawa housing starts rebounded last month to reach a three-year high in December and a 24-year high for the fourth quarter. Total housing starts in Ottawa's census metropolitan area reached 820 units in Dec. 2009, a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation report said yesterday.

The number of starts "was a direct consequence of the continued tightness coming from the resale market due to a lack of listings," said CMHC market analyst Daniel Benatuil.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

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N.B. man guilty of obstruction in fatal snowmobile crash

A New Brunswick man has pleaded guilty to three counts of obstruction following an RCMP investigation into a snowmobile crash that killed his wife. Ross Veniot, 46, of Bathurst received a fine of $3,450 and 12 months of probation. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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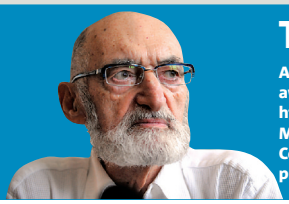

Two more resign from Order

A total of five recipients of the Order of Canada have officially resigned their awards as protest over pro-choice crusader Dr. Henry Morgentaler, left, receiving his on July 1, 2008. Three resignations were accepted this past June by Gov.- Gen. Michaëlle Jean while two more were announced yesterday, Father Lucien Larré of Coquitlam, B.C., and Renato Giuseppe Bosisio, a University of Montreal engineer professor. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Full-day kindergarten on way for Ontario

600 schools across the province in 1st phase of program

Nearly 600 Ontario schools will offer full-day kindergarten to four- and five-year-olds next fall, The Canadian Press has learned.

Premier Dalton McGuinty, who is moving ahead with the costly program despite the province's unprecedented $25-billion deficit, will be in Chatham, Ont., today to unveil details about the first phase of the plan that's expected to take five years to fully implement.

McGuinty will announce which local schools in Chatham will offer the full-day kindergarten, while members of provincial parliament will do the same from their ridings, a government official said yesterday.

26 Class sizes will also increase under the new program, but the government has promised there will be enough funding for two adults for every 26 children. The current provincial cap for primary classes is 20 to 23 students.

A complete list of schools that got the green light will be posted online shortly after, the source said.

About 35,000 children, or 15 per cent of all eligible kids, will be able to enrol in the program next September, which McGuinty has promised to expand to 50,000 kids in 2011.

All eligible four- and five-year-olds should be able to enrol in the program in 2015, at an estimated cost of $1.5 billion a year.

McGuinty, who made full-day learning an election promise, and the Liberal government have set aside $500 million over two years to start up full-day kindergarten. Priority is supposed to be given to low-income neighbourhoods, as well as those that have available space and have the greatest need for the program.

About 18,000 of the more than 240,000 junior and senior kindergarten students in Ontario are already enrolled in full-day learning at a handful of francophone and Catholic schools, which fund the programs by diverting money from other sources.

The full-day program is optional, as school is not mandatory in Ontario until age six, but busing will only be available twice a day at schools that offer the program.

If parents don't want their children to be in school all day, they will have to make their own travel arrangements at the beginning or end of their child's day. Or they can ask their school board to switch their child to another school that offers the half-day program, said Michelle Despault, spokeswoman for Education Minister Kathleen Wynne.

Teachers will take the lead in full-day kindergarten, but will also work with early educators in the classroom.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nova Scotia **Burying a hero**

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The flag-draped coffin carrying the remains of Sgt. Kirk Taylor, a reservist with the 84th Independent Field Battery, is carried from his funeral service at a hockey arena in Yarmouth, N.S., yesterday. Taylor was one of four soldiers, who, along with a journalist, were killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan on Dec. 30.

News in brief

CRITICAL A 23-month old New Brunswick girl is in critical condition after ingesting the drug methadone. RCMP Const. Chantal Farrah says two people were arrested and later released, but no charges have been laid. She says the investigation is ongoing.

TERROR The first adult to stand trial charged with terrorism offences in the Toronto 18 case is pleading not guilty. Shareef Abdelhaleem, 34, is charged with participating in a terrorist group and intending to cause an explosion. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tiger-mauling death prompts call to ban dangerous pets

ONTARIO The tiger-mauling death of an Ontario man should serve as a wake-up call for the province of the dangers of owning exotic animals, the World Society for the Protection of Animals said yesterday.

Norman Buwalda, 66, went into the tiger's cage on his property in Southwold, Ont., on Sunday afternoon to feed the 300-kilogram animal when it attacked and killed him, police said.

His death was a tragedy that could have been prevented had the province banned the keeping of dangerous exotic pets when it revised the OSPCA Act earlier this year, said Melissa Matlow, programs officer for the society. Ontario is the only province that doesn't require a licence to keep dangerous exotic animals, the society added.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Don't expect an interest rate hike anytime soon, BoC official says

ECONOMY The Bank of Canada appears to be cooling its rhetoric on the country's housing boom, all but ruling out raising interest rates to dissuade prospective home buyers from taking on too much mortgage debt.

Bank official David Wolf said in a speech yesterday that in the central bank's view it is premature to be talking about a housing bubble in Canada.

And he said even if the bank judged that housing prices were getting out of hand, raising interest rates is too blunt an instrument since it would have the effect of cooling off the entire economy.

"We would, in essence, be dousing the entire Canadian economy with cold water, just as it emerges from recession," he said in an Edmonton speech delivered on behalf of deputy governor Timothy Lane, who could not travel to the Alberta capital for personal reasons. Notes from the speech were posted on the bank's website.

"We would, in essence, be dousing the entire Canadian economy with cold water, just as it emerges from recession."
David Wolf, Bank of Canada official

"As a result, it would take longer for economic growth to return to potential and for inflation to get back to target," he added.

"This is why we say monetary policy is a blunt instrument for achieving financial stability."

Wolf, a former chief economist with Merrill Lynch Canada who is currently adviser to governor Mark Carney, said there were other ways to dampen Canadians' enthusiasm for homes without resorting to raising interest rates.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has also openly discussed policy measures to cool the housing market, including raising the minimum down payment requirement above five per cent, or reducing the maximum length a house can be amortized from the current 35 years.

The bank has been highlighting for months the danger of Canadians getting in over their heads in purchasing homes, warning that buyers should ensure they don't take on too much debt.

The bank's worry is that homeowners with large mortgages that are manageable now with interest rates at record lows won't be able to afford their monthly payments once interest rates start rising, as is expected later this year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCANLIFE

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Palin joining Fox News
Sarah Palin is taking her message to Fox News. The former Alaska governor and Republican U.S. vice-presidential candidate will provide commentary for the cable network. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Blockbuster movie labelled racist by some

Near the end of the hit film Avatar, the villain snarls at the hero, "How does it feel to betray your own race?" Both men are white — although the hero is inhabiting a blue-skinned, nine-foot-tall, long-tailed alien.

Zoe Saldana plays Na'vi archer Neytiri in Avatar. The film is being criticized by some who allege it contains racist themes, such as a white hero once again saving the primitive natives.

Strange as it may seem for a film that pits greedy, immoral humans against noble denizens of a faraway moon, Avatar is being criticized by a small but vocal group of people who allege it contains racist themes — the white hero once again saving the primitive natives.

Since the film opened to widespread critical acclaim three weeks ago, hundreds of blog posts, newspaper articles, tweets and YouTube videos have said things such as the film is "a fantasy about race told from the point of view of white people" and that it reinforces "the white Messiah fable."

Adding to the racial dynamic is that the main Na'vi characters are played by actors of colour, led by a Dominican, Zoe Saldana, as the princess. The film also is an obvious metaphor for how European settlers in America wiped out the Indians.

Annalee Newitz, editor-in-chief of the sci-fi website io9.com, likened Avatar to the recent film District 9, in which a white man accidentally becomes an alien and then helps save them.

"When will whites stop making these movies and start thinking about race in a new way?" wrote Newitz, who is white.

Writer/director James Cameron said in an email to The Associated Press that his film "asks us to open our eyes and truly see others, respecting them even though they are different, in the hope that we may find a way to prevent conflict and live more harmoniously on this world. I hardly think that is a racist message."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"(The movie) asks us to open our eyes and truly see others ... in the hope we may find a way to prevent conflict and live harmoniously ... I hardly think that is a racist message."
Avatar director James Cameron

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Landmark trial begins

SAN FRANCISCO The first federal trial to determine if the U.S. Constitution prohibits states from outlawing same-sex marriage got under way yesterday, and the two gay couples on whose behalf the case was brought will be among the first witnesses.

The proceedings involve a challenge to Proposition 8, the gay marriage ban approved by California voters in 2008. Regardless of the outcome, the case is likely to be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, where it ultimately could become a landmark that determines if gay Americans have the right to marry.

Two hours before trial, the top U.S. court weighed in on an issue related to the case, blocking video of the proceedings from being posted on YouTube.com. It said justices need more time to review that issue, and put the order in place at least until tomorrow.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

SANCTIONS Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says the U.S. has concluded the best way to pressure Iran to come clean on nuclear ambitions is to impose sanctions on the country's ruling elite. Clinton said yesterday a final decision has not been made. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANTARCTICA Sea water under an Antarctic ice shelf showed no sign of higher temperatures, despite fears of a thaw linked to global warming that could bring higher world ocean levels, tests showed yesterday.

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Comment

Grits finally fight back

NationalReport
Lawrence Martin

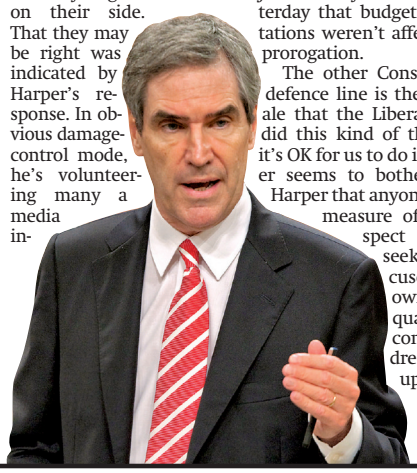
metronews.ca/nationalreport

If, as the Conservatives interpret it, politics is war, it's no surprise they have been winning. They are the only side that's been deploying the heavy artillery.

In response to their attack ads against Stéphane Dion and Michael Ignatieff, the Liberals have been absent from the battlefield. In the Dion case, they didn't have the money to afford counterblasts. With Iggy, they've been cautious, not wanting to be accused of joining Stephen Harper on the political low road.

That's changing. Liberal ads released this week on the closing down of Parliament hit the prime minister where it stings — with a coverup charge. Team Ignatieff is aware it's not the alleged torture of Afghan detainees that has the public worked up. It's the autocratic arrogance of the PM in thinking he can repeatedly manipulate the democratic system for partisan gain.

Given the heady response they've been getting on the prorogue issue, the Grits feel they've got momentum on their side. That they may be right was indicated by Harper's response. In obvious damage-control mode, he's volunteering many a media interview. That's something he doesn't do often.


Michael Ignatieff

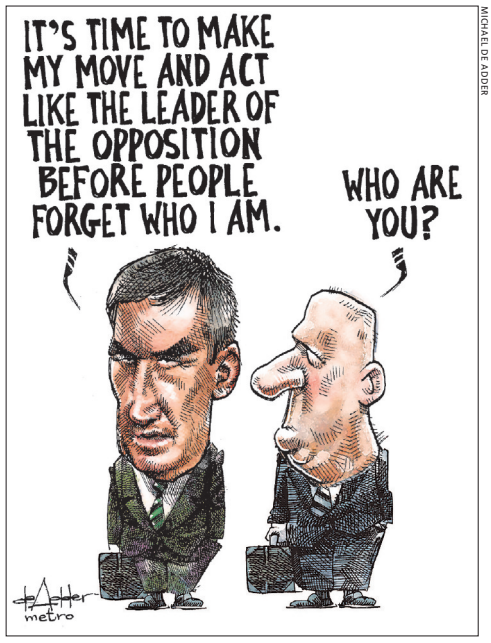
He tried to excuse the shutdown of Parliament by saying the government needed more time to prepare for a new budget. But the government had a five-week Christmas break even without a prorogue. In any case, the PM was contradicted by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, who said yesterday that budget consultations weren't affected by prorogation.

The other Conservative defence line is the rationale that the Liberals once did this kind of thing, so it's OK for us to do it. It never seems to bother team Harper that anyone with a measure of self-respect doesn't seek to excuse their own inadequacies by constantly dredging up the inadequacies of others.

In the abuse-of-power sweepstakes, the Jean Chrétien Liberals did indeed run up quite a tally, not the least of which was closing down an inquiry into alleged brutality by Canadian soldiers in Somalia. The move was dictatorial and inexcusable. But Ignatieff had nothing to do with any of the malfeasance in the Chrétien days. In any case, the Conservatives promised a new era of accountability and transparency. The promise has become a standing joke.

On one level — the lack of civility in our politics — it's unfortunate the Liberals are resorting to attack ads. But to compete against the Harper goon squad, they didn't have much choice. They could continue to get run over. Or they could finally start giving this prime minister some of his own medicine.

Lawrence Martin is a journalist and author of 10 books who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Facebook rides to Parliament's rescue

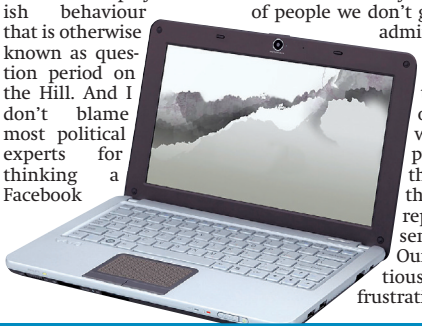
Norm Beach

I always thought Facebook was just a cosy corner in cyberspace for idle chat and gossip.

But recently a flash mob of Canadians upset at the abrupt shutdown of Parliament began airing its beefs on the social networking site, and the group has gone viral, attracting more than 10,000 members each day. (Yesterday, more than 150,000 people had signed up.) Now postings are so frequent that within minutes anything put on the main board becomes an "older post" as new comments and information links flood onto the site.

It started with a graduate student at the University of Alberta, peeved by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's New Year's resolution to shut down Parliament until after the Olympics.

The prime minister apparently thought most Canadians wouldn't miss the crude display of boorish behaviour that is otherwise known as question period on the Hill. And I don't blame most political experts for thinking a Facebook group called Canadians Against Proroguing Parliament wouldn't fly far in cyberspace, let alone influence the hardball game of politics. But ordinary Canadians have confounded the experts.



As one of those ordinary Canadians, I think I know why.

Parliament may be full of people we don't greatly admire, but we are the ones who put them there to represent us. Our fractious and frustrating House of Commons is the only democracy we have, the place our elected representatives decide the laws that govern this country.

Stephen Harper may think most Canadians don't pay very close attention to what goes on in Parliament, and he's right. But if our democratic space is suddenly, and for no good reason, shut down, we start to smell something rotten in Ottawa. We might even begin to think that what goes on in our nation's capital is more important than who's groping who in the bedrooms of Hollywood. Hard to believe, eh? Well, stranger things have happened. Even on Facebook.

Norm Beach is a writer and teacher in Toronto.

Worth mentioning

Vicar's blessing updates traditional ceremony

God bless this BlackBerry.

A venerable British church has done what email addicts and workaholics have been doing for years — invoking the Almighty's blessing on their high-tech gadgets.

The Rev. Canon David Parrott blessed a symbolic heap of laptops and smartphones on the altar of London's 17th-century St. Lawrence Jewry church yesterday. An effort, he said, to remind the capital's busy office workers that God's grace can reach them in many ways.

"It's the technology that is our daily working tool, and it's a technology we should bless," Parrott said.

Parishioners took out cellphones as Parrott recited a blessing over them and their electronic devices. A few held their phones up in the air as he ran through the prayer.

Parrott said the blessing ceremony was an update of a traditional back-to-work ceremony called "Plow Monday," in which villagers gathered to bless a symbolic farming implement dragged to the church's door. Parrott said that ceremony didn't have much relevance for his church, which was "nowhere near a field in the middle of London."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

We Know What You're Thinking

26% The number of Canadians who visit an online social network at least once weekly.

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Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

CFIB launches Red Tape week
One of Canada's largest business associations has launched what's being called the first-ever Red Tape Awareness Week.
The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that businesses spend more than $30 billion annually to comply with government regulations. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Amsterdam **Buy is brewing**

BEELD.DELONG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Heineken CEO Jean-Francois van Boxmeer smiles during a photo call in Amsterdam recently. Heineken NV said yesterday it will buy the beer-making operations of Mexico's Femsa in an all-share deal that values the maker of Dos Equis, Tecate and Sol beers at $5.5 billion US.

Companies confident, expect to hire: Survey

Canadian companies are feeling more confident that the economic recovery is taking hold and say they are stepping up plans to hire more workers and invest, the Bank of Canada said yesterday.

The central bank's quarterly survey of business conditions, and a companion survey of senior loan officers, both released yesterday, were generally encouraging and point to improving conditions across the board.

In a news conference in St. Boniface, Man., Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said he was encouraged that both consumer and business confidence were improving but added that dangers remained.

"The economy is still recovering ...(but) has not recovered," he said.

"As you can see from the employment numbers on Friday, there's still reason to be concerned about the performance of our recovery and particularly of the United States economy," he said.

In a separate survey of senior loan officers, the central bank said lending conditions to firms have stabilized after almost two years when the balance of opinion reflected a tightening trend. "These improved conditions are consistent with borrowers' increased access to financing in capital markets during recent quarters, and can also be attributed to the outlook for this segment being seen as favourable by survey respondents," the bank said.

The two surveys were conducted in late November and early December.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Friday reports

- Friday's employment reports disappointed analysts on both sides of the border, with Canada dropping 2,600 jobs in December when a 20,000 gain was expected, and the U.S. reporting a contraction of 85,000 jobs.

Canadians tour home: StatsCan

HOLIDAYS Tourism spending in Canada increased 0.3 per cent in real terms in the third quarter, as expenditures by Canadians advanced while those of international visitors fell.

It was the first increase in tourism spending in five quarters, ending the longest downturn since the early 1990s.

Statistics Canada reports tourism spending fell 3.1 per cent from the second quarter of 2008 to the second quarter of 2009.

Spending by Canadians on tourism in Canada increased 0.9 per cent in the third quarter, following four quarters of decline.

Spending by international visitors fell 2.4 per cent in the third quarter, the seventh straight quarterly decrease.

International tourism spending in Canada was 15.4 per cent below where it stood in the fourth quarter of 2007. Tourism gross domestic product expanded 0.4 per cent in the third quarter, the first increase in five quarters. Tourism employment was unchanged from the previous quarter. THE CANADIAN PRESS

RRSP contributions to decline, RBC says

RETIREMENT RBC Economics says it expects RRSP contributions will continue to decline through 2020, as more of the the baby boom generation moves into retirement.

RBC assistant chief economist Paul Ferley says RRSP contributions grew steadily for three decades starting in the late 1960s but began falling in the late 1990s as "boomers got older and contributed less."

He says the retirement savings pattern differs depending on the age group, with those aged 34 and under the least likely to make RRSP contributions.

Ferley says contributions start to move lower after age 55 and the growing number of Canadians in that age group will likely be a key factor in overall RRSP contributions continuing to drop over the next 10 years.

The RBC report found that contributions to registered retirement savings plans, measured as a share of personal income, have declined steadily since peaking in 1997.

The study concludes that the so-called baby boomers, who were born in the two decades following the Second World War, can explain the majority of the growth in RRSP contributions before 1997 and the dropoff since then.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCANLIFE

Rising demand may lead Toyota to manufacture new hybrids in Canada. Scan this code for the full story.

Business in brief

AGREEMENT Creditors of Magna Entertainment Corp. agreed to the outlines of a plan that will end bankruptcy and settle a lawsuit against billionaire owner Frank Stronach, attorneys said.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

LAYOFFS Internet company AOL will lay off up to 1,200 workers because it didn't get enough volunteers to accept buyouts. AOL spokeswoman Tricia Primrose said yesterday that only 1,100 volunteered to leave. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Your Money

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Time fast running out to claim renovation credit

MoneyMatters

Q I own my home but rent out the basement. If I make alterations to the basement and to my kitchen upstairs, can I claim the maximum Home Renovation Tax Credit? — Paul

A To qualify for the Home Renovation Tax Credit, goods and services must be acquired or performed after Jan. 27, 2009 and before Feb. 1, 2010. You may claim the maximum credit for the personal use portion, such as the kitchen. The basement will not qualify.

A house used for earning income such as rent does not qualify for the HRTC. However, a portion spent for common areas such as driveway, roofing etc. for personal use, will qualify for principal homes.

There is a $10,000 maximum cap.

Some eligible expenses:

- Renovations, such as kitchen, bathroom, basement, bedrooms, etc.
- New flooring, roofing, AC, furnace, doors and windows, window covering, etc.
- Additions such as fence, deck, walls etc.
- Installation of new pool, hot tubs, security systems, solar panels, etc.
- Upgrading electrical, plumbing, etc.
- Painting interior or exterior of home, some landscaping.

Ineligible expenses:

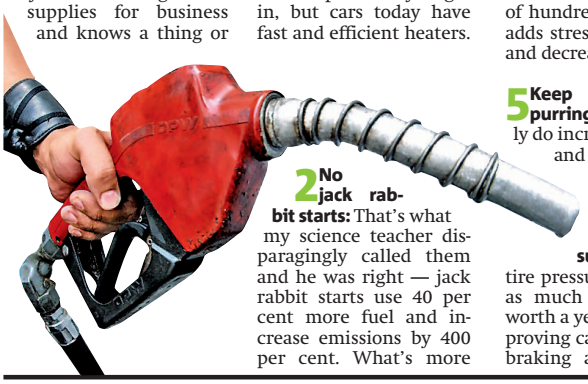
- Purchase of furniture, appliances, tools, etc.
- Cleaning and maintenance of carpet, home, snow removal, etc.
- Financing cost.
- Rental or business part of eligible home.

Henry Choo Chong, CGA, can be reached at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca.

7 steps to saving fuel

AlisonOnMoney

In my never ending quest to save money, here's seven painless ways to cut fuel costs courtesy of 4Refuel Ltd. a Langley B.C. company which manages fuel supplies for business and knows a thing or two about saving a litre here and there.



1 Kill the idle: Not only is it illegal in some places but more than three minutes of idling can shorten engine life and excessive idling can add as much as 50 percent to your fuel costs. Idle idiots also shorten the life of their engine oil by 75 per cent. During the depths of winter's chill, it's tempting to warm up before you get in, but cars today have fast and efficient heaters.

2 No jack rabbit starts: That's what my science teacher disparagingly called them and he was right — jack rabbit starts use 40 per cent more fuel and increase emissions by 400 per cent. What's more they save less than three minutes over 60 minutes of driving.

3 Pussy foot the accelerator: Cars travelling at 120 km\h versus 100 km\h use 20 per cent more fuel. My husband will be thrilled with this tip. His favourite words to me are: Slow down.

4 Put your car on a diet: Eliminate superfluous items — golf clubs, in-laws, etc. Even a couple of hundred extra pounds adds stress to the engine and decreases gas milage.

5 Keep your engine purring: Tune-ups really do increase gas milage and extend the life of your engine.

6 Check your tire pressure: Correct tire pressure saves gas — as much as two weeks worth a year — while improving car handling and braking and decreasing tire wear.

7 Take the ankle express: I'm amazed at how many people get in their cars to drive from store to store at the power centre malls rather than walk a few hundred metres. A little ankle express, for kids and adults, improves gas milage and magically shrinks waists.

Alison's Money Rule:

- You have no influence over oil prices but it's within your power to have the same effect as a decline at the pump with a little effort and self-discipline.

Alison Griffiths is a financial journalist, author and host of Maxed Out on the W Network. Write to her at alison@alisongriffiths.ca.

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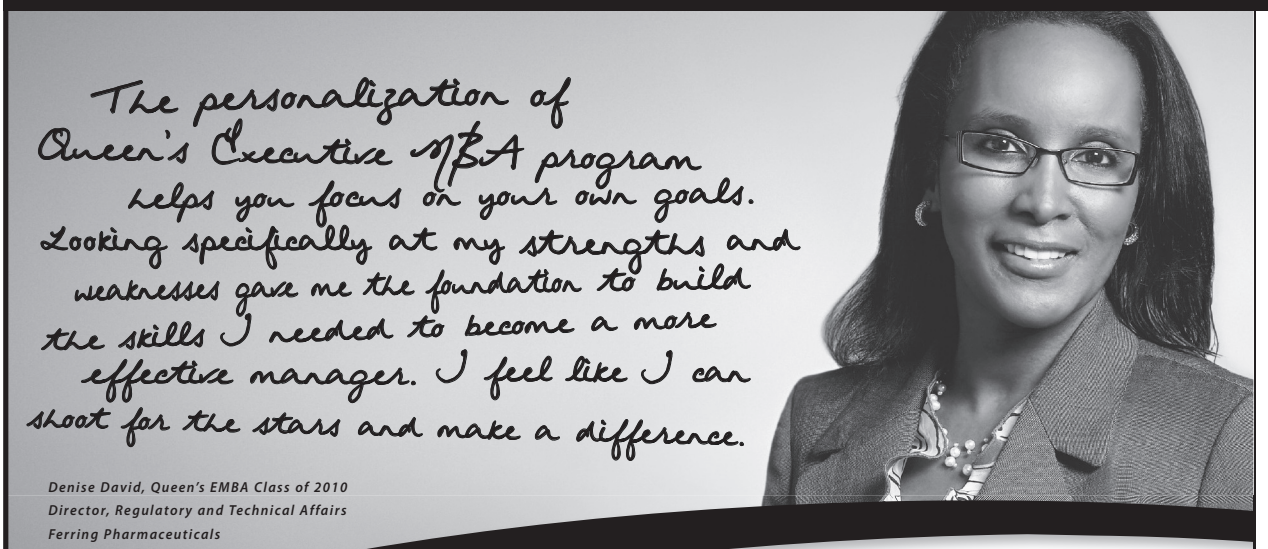

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Redd to miss rest of season

The Milwaukee Bucks say guard Michael Redd will miss the rest of the season because of a knee injury. Redd tore the ACL and MCL in his left knee Sunday night in the second quarter of the Bucks' game against the Los Angeles Lakers. An MRI yesterday in Phoenix revealed the injury, which will require surgery. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports

Fake labels poke fun at Tiger

Gatorade says bootleg labels with a picture of Tiger Woods, the word "unfaithful" and the Gatorade name have been found on bottles in Colorado stores. Gatorade spokeswoman Karen May said yesterday the labels were fakes. She declined to say whether the bottles contained real Gatorade. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

McGwire comes clean

Former slugger says he used steroids to overcome injuries

Mark McGwire finally came clean, admitting he used steroids when he broke baseball's home run record in 1998.

McGwire said in a statement sent to The Associated Press yesterday he used steroids on and off for nearly a decade.

"It's very emotional, it's telling family members, friends and coaches, you know, it's former teammates to try to get hold of, you know, that I'm coming clean and being honest," he said during a 20-minute telephone interview, his voice repeatedly cracking. "It's the first time they've ever heard me, you know, talk about this. I hid it from everybody."

McGwire said he also used human growth hormone, and he didn't know if his use of performance-enhancing drugs contributed to some of the injuries that led to his retirement, at age 38, in 2001.

"That's a good question," he said.

He repeatedly expressed regret for his decision to use steroids, which he said was "foolish" and caused by his desire to overcome injuries, get back on the field and prove he was worth his multi-million dollar salary.

"You don't know that you'll ever have to talk about the skeleton in your closet on a national level," he said. "I did this for health purposes. There's no way I did this for any type of strength use."

McGwire hit a then-record 70 homers in 1998 during a compelling race with Sammy Sosa, who finished with 66.

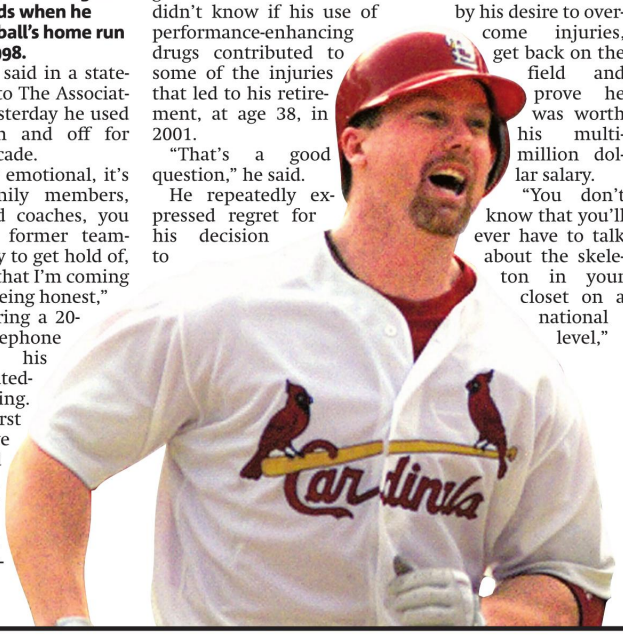
More than anything else, the home-run spree revitalized baseball following the crippling strike that wiped out the 1994 World Series.

Now that McGwire has come clean, increased glare might fall on Sosa, who has denied using performing-enhancing drugs.

"I wish I had never played during the steroid era," McGwire said.

McGwire's decision to admit using steroids was prompted by his decision to become hitting coach of the St. Louis Cardinals, his final big league team.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Mark McGwire

Sports in brief

NFL Pete Carroll is gone from USC and back in the NFL. After days of talks, the Seattle Seahawks hired the charismatic coach yesterday, luring him away from the University of Southern California.

SOCCER Carlos Tevez scored three goals as Manchester City outplayed Blackburn 4-1 yesterday to move into fourth in the Premier League and hand new manager Roberto Mancini his fourth straight win.

BASEBALL Vladimir Guerrero and the Texas Rangers have finalized a one-year contract that includes a mutual option for 2011. The agreement was completed yesterday after the eight-time all-star and former AL MVP passed a physical.

BILLS A source requesting anonymity told The Associated Press the Bills have asked the New York Jets for permission to interview offensive co-ordinator Brian Schottenheimer for Buffalo's head coaching vacancy.

HOCKEY Forward Taylor Hall was named North America's top draft-eligible skater in a mid-season list of prospects published by the NHL's Central Scouting Bureau yesterday. That placed him one spot ahead of rival Tyler Seguin, who is battling Hall for the Ontario Hockey League's scoring lead.

HIRING The Cleveland Browns hired Tom Heckert as their general manager yesterday, luring him away from the Philadelphia Eagles. Heckert had been with the Eagles since 2001, spending the past four seasons as GM.

CUBS Pitching great Greg Maddux has rejoined the Chicago Cubs as an assistant to general manager Jim Hendry. The 355-game winner, who started his major league career with the Cubs in 1986 and rejoined them from 2004-06, retired as a player after the 2008 season.

NFL Eagles coach Andy Reid says Donovan McNabb will be the team's quarterback next season. McNabb's status was questioned because he has one year left on his contract and he's failed to lead Philadelphia to a Super Bowl victory in 11 seasons.

TOGO The African football confederation says Togo has been officially disqualified from the African Cup of Nations soccer tournament. Togo was scheduled to play its first match against Ghana yesterday in Group B. But the team withdrew after two people from the Togolese delegation died in an ambush last week.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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SCANLIFE

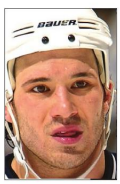
How has the attack on Togo's soccer team affected security plans for the World Cup? Scan this code for the full story.

Danton hoping to play for Halifax university

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

BACK TO SCHOOL A former NHL player who spent five years in prison after he was convicted of a plot to kill his former agent could suit up for the Saint Mary's Huskies this semester.

Mike Danton, who was released from prison in September, has been cleared by Saint Mary's administration to enrol in sociology courses and suit up for the hockey team.



Mike Danton

The 29-year-old is only waiting to receive clearance from the national parole board to move to Halifax from Ontario. The decision could be made as early as this morning.

Saint Mary's athletic director Steve Sarty said the school has "opened its arms" to accept Danton.

"The easy answer is, 'No, we don't want to have any part of you,'" Sarty said. "But the more positive step is to say, 'Yeah, we want to get involved in this process and we have a nurturing environment where we will allow this process to happen.'"

Danton, who had nine goals, five assists and 182 penalty minutes in 87 games with the St. Louis Blues and New Jersey Devils, pleaded guilty in 2004 to the failed plot to kill David Frost.

He was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison.

The Huskies are ranked eighth in Canadian Interuniversity Sport with a 10-3-4 record. Sarty said captain Marc Rancourt spoke to Danton by phone and that the team, "to a man," supports the school's decision to welcome Danton.

"Everything has lined up for this to be a positive situation for Mike and we're happy to be part of it," Sarty said.

Danton has two seasons of CIS eligibility remaining.

Colts confident in ground game

NFL The Indianapolis Colts know what others are saying about their ground game.

Yes, the 3.5 yards per carry rank below the NFL norm, and the 80.9 yards per game are last in the NFL. And no, that's not the traditional way to win a Super Bowl.

The Colts (14-2) also believe those numbers do not tell the whole story, something they intend to prove starting Saturday night against Baltimore.

"I feel confident in what I'm doing, and I feel good about what's going on out there," Colts running back Joseph Addai said with a confident smile.

Indianapolis' rushing ranks at No. 32 in the league.

"From a statistical standpoint, you can look at it and say it's not very good," said coach Jim Caldwell. "But I certainly don't feel like that from a schematic standpoint and what we're trying to get accomplished."

The numbers haven't changed much from last season, though, when the Colts ranked 31st in rushing with averages of 3.4 yards per carry and 79.6 yards per game.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jovanovski hit with 2-game suspension

NHL Phoenix Coyotes defenceman Ed Jovanovski has been hit with a two-game suspension for his elbow hit on Islanders rookie John Tavares.

The league announced yesterday Jovanovski's second two-game suspension in just over a month.

He was suspended Dec. 9 for a forearm hit on Minnesota centre Andrew Ebbett.

That makes Jovanovski a repeat offender under the terms of the CAB.

Accordingly, he forfeits $158,536.59 US in salary based on the number of games (82) in a season, rather than the number of days (193). The money goes to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Minnesota 4 Pittsburgh 3
Colorado at Calgary
Nashville at Vancouver
San Jose at Los Angeles

TODAY'S GAMES
Carolina at Toronto
Detroit at N.Y. Islanders
New Jersey at N.Y. Rangers
Dallas at Philadelphia
OTTAWA at Atlanta
Washington at Tampa Bay
Columbus at St. Louis
Nashville at Edmonton
San Jose at Phoenix

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Indiana 105 Toronto 101
Atlanta 102 Boston 96
Philadelphia 96 New Orleans 92
Detroit at Chicago
New York at Oklahoma City
Miami at Utah
Minnesota at Denver
Milwaukee at Phoenix
Cleveland at Golden State

TODAY'S GAMES
Houston at Charlotte
Detroit at Washington
L.A. Clippers at Memphis
L.A. Lakers at San Antonio
Orlando at Sacramento

NFL PLAYOFFS

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

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AFC Baltimore at Indianapolis

SUNDAY, JAN. 17
NFC Dallas at Minnesota
AFC N.Y. Jets at San Diego

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Simpsons headed to Vancouver

The Simpsons will take aim at curling this season when Homer and Marge head to Vancouver for the 2010 Olympics. In an episode due to air around the time of the Winter Games in February, the couple represents the United States in the semi-fictional event of mixed curling. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vancouver Games

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Speed Skating Canada happy with team mix

The mix, Speed Skating Canada believes, is just right.

Clara Hughes, Cindy Klassen and Jeremy Wotherspoon provide an aura of success and veteran know-how. Kristina Groves, Christine Nesbitt and Denny Morrison look to be right at their peak. Brittany Schussler, Jamie Gregg and Lucas Makowsky offer potential, both for the present and the future.

All that remains now for the eight women and eight men named to the long-track speedskating team for the Vancouver Olympics yesterday is to deliver, and that won't be easy.

Expectations are sky-high for the speedskaters, who have enjoyed frequent international success over the past four years since winning eight medals at Turin in 2006, and who are some of the country's biggest names heading into the Games. They have about a month left to finalize their preparations, and capitalize on the opportunity in front of them. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Next up

- The skaters will now break off into their individual training groups, preparing for a Continental Qualifier event Jan. 23-24 in Calgary.

JEFF GROSS/GETTY IMAGES

Drew Doughty of the Los Angeles Kings is pursued by Brendan Morrison of the Washington Capitals at L.A.'s Staples Center earlier this month. Doughty has eight points since being picked for Team Canada.

Proving his worth

Doughty on a tear since making Team Canada

The excitement of being selected to Team Canada doesn't appear to have worn off for Drew Doughty.

The 20-year-old Los Angeles Kings defenceman could hardly sleep leading up to the Dec. 30 announcement and ended up being one of Steve Yzerman's boldest selections for the Olympic team. He's responded extremely well to that vote of confidence, having accumulated more points (eight) than anyone else on Team Canada from the time the roster was announced through Sunday's games.

Not bad for a guy who was tossing and turning in bed just two weeks ago.

"I was pretty nervous," Doughty said after being named to the team. "I didn't really know what my chances were. I knew I had an outside shot. Making it is definitely a big surprise, I'm just so excited."

"I knew I had an outside shot. Making it is definitely a big surprise, I'm just so excited."
Drew Doughty

He was held off the scoresheet that night in Calgary before putting up eight assists over the following five games. That streak included a four-assist game in San Jose Jan. 4 — the most productive night of his brief NHL career.

Interestingly, two of Canada's other defencemen have also been putting up nice offensive numbers since Yzerman selected them to the team. Chicago's Duncan Keith and Philadelphia's Chris Pronger both have seven points over that stretch, with Keith having moved to within two points of his career-high of 44 with almost half a season to go.

It's no coincidence there are so many blue-liners with offensive tendencies on the Olympic team. The Canadian squad that finished seventh at the Games four years ago seemed to be missing that element.

"We had trouble moving the puck on the big ice (in Turin), I guess would be the best way to describe it," said Kevin Lowe, a member of Yzerman's management team. "Now we've come almost full circle in terms of making an emphasis on guys who can move the puck, get it in the hands of the forwards. ... We think we have that in this group." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Langenbrunner named captain of U.S. team

In one of his first acts as captain of a young American team facing long odds at an Olympic hockey tournament, Jamie Langenbrunner took exception with a comparison drawn between his group and the USA's famed "Miracle on Ice" squad at the 1980 Winter Games.

And then he substituted antagonists.

"A little bit of a different situation in my opinion," Langenbrunner said. "As much as Canada deserves all the credit they're given for the players that they have, the 23 players named to the U.S. team play in the same league as those guys.

"We feel quite comfortable playing against them on a nightly basis and feel that we belong on the same ice as them."

Langenbrunner was formally announced as Team USA captain in a conference call yesterday, asked to lead a roster that contains only three players with Olympic experience. The Americans named four alternates to help shoulder the burden: Zach Parise, Dustin Brown, Brian Rafalski and Ryan Suter, whose father was a member of Team USA's surprise triumph at the 1980 Winter Games at Lake Placid, N.Y. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Skier looks to build confidence in next races

ALPINE After stumbling in the final race of last year, alpine skier Erik Guay wants to make some big strides in 2010.

Guay is hoping for some positive results in the final two World Cup downhill races prior to next month's Olympics.

"I'm always looking for a little more," the Mont-Tremblant, Que., resident said in a telephone interview yesterday from Wengen, Switzerland. "I'd like to get 2010 started on the right foot and hopefully build some confidence heading toward the Games."

Erik Guay

Being on the podium either this week in Wengen, or next weekend at Kitzbuehel, Austria, would be a great springboard into the Games.

The leg-burning, 4.5-kilometre Wengen Lauberhorn course is the longest and most physically demanding on the World Cup circuit. Whoever wins on the Hahnenkamm at Kitzbuehel can wear the crown as that year's best downhiller.

"On a regular World Cup season these would be the two biggest races of the year, the one most people are focusing on," said Guay.

"It just happens these ones are leading into the Olympics.

"It is great to have good results here and get the confidence boosted up before heading over to Canada."

So far Guay has had an up-and-down season. He just missed the podium in the year's first super-giant slalom race, finishing fourth at Lake Louise.

The 28-year-old has failed to break into the top 10 in four downhill races. Guay looked to be on track with an 11th in Val Gardena, Italy, before Christmas, then didn't finish a Dec. 29 race in Bormio. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Learning Curve is a special feature that focuses on education and student life.

Learning Curve

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Keys to starting over

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Going back to school after you've been in the workforce can feel a little daunting, but with a fresh approach, anyone can make a fresh start.

Jo-Anne Clarke, director of business and professional programs at the University of Calgary, says it's only natural to feel a little anxiety when you're returning to school, but it's important to realize you're starting over with a clean slate.

"I find that students can sometimes carry an old image of who they are as a student," Clarke said.

"As an adult, you have an opportunity to recreate who you are as a student — you have life experience to bring into the classroom."

"As an adult, you have an opportunity to recreate who you are as a student — you have life experience to bring into the classroom." Jo-Anne Clarke

Time management is crucial but more important are managed expectations — don't try to do a full course load while running your full-time life because it just won't work and your studies will suffer. Many students start out doing a single course at a time to test the waters and get a sense of how much time and effort they can commit, Clarke says.

"Don't bite off more than you can chew. Students who take on more than they can handle don't enjoy the process and are not as successful. Learning is fun but it is a process; you can't rush it," Clarke said.

If writing was never your biggest strength, Clarke recommends taking a writing skills refresher course to help make further learning much easier, as the writing style you've been using in the workplace likely isn't ideal for school.

Gervan Fearon, dean of The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University in Toronto, agrees that being realistic about your workload and treating your education like a long-term goal rather than a sprint will give you a better experience overall.

"Look at it like an educational exercise program. If I wanted to run a marathon, I wouldn't just wake up one day and do it; I'd have to train," Fearon said.

A common worry is that students who return to school won't be able to relate to others in the class, but Fearon says the truth is most people in a continuing education classroom — including the instructors — will be in the same situation.

"When you do go back to school, you'll see a lot of individuals that are very much in the same position as you. Many of the instructors also work in the field they teach, so they're sensitive to your reality," Fearon said.

Remember, you're in school to further yourself so enjoy the experience, Fearon says.

"There is a prize at the end — there are significant payoffs in career, earning and to all the people around you. It's an opportunity to grow and be able to contribute more to ourselves, our families and our society," he said.

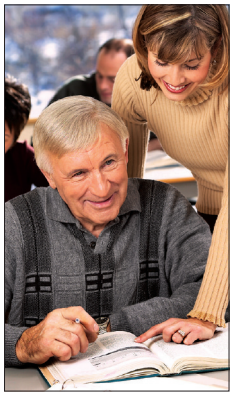
Time management is crucial for adult students, experts say.

Mature students tend to be more dedicated, focused, expert says

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

Leaving the workforce to go to college or university can seem financially, academically and emotionally daunting, but tapping into campus resources can ease the transition, experts say.

"They're not going to be alone," said Pamela Hanft, associate vice-president academic at Ontario's Humber College. "We're seeing an increasing number of quite mature students enrolling on a full-time basis."



Many mature students are surprised at how receptive younger students are to studying with them.

This year, the college has 1,500 students aged 35 and up, a whopping 60 per cent increase on last year. Hanft attributes the rise to laid-off workers retraining. Technically, "mature students" are students older than 19 who have been out of school for more than a year, but Hanft said the challenges those adults who have spent 15 or more years working face are quite different.

If would-be students aren't sure about enrolling full time, she urged them to try an evening class first.

Like other post-secondary institutes, Humber has a special handbook and orientation for mature students covering child care, finances and other concerns older students may have. There are a slew of career-advancement services available to help students pick a path to a successful career.

"When we talk to mature students, there's often an academic concern. They haven't been in school for a while, they think they're rusty," Hanft said.

Emotionally, mature learners can be intimidated by the thought of being surrounded by so many young students. But many mature students are "genuinely surprised and pleased" at how receptive younger students are to studying with them, Hanft said.

"The older student brings a general experience of the work world that the younger students are really interested in."

Mature students tend to do well academically, bringing an intense level of focus and dedication that might be missing in their younger colleagues.

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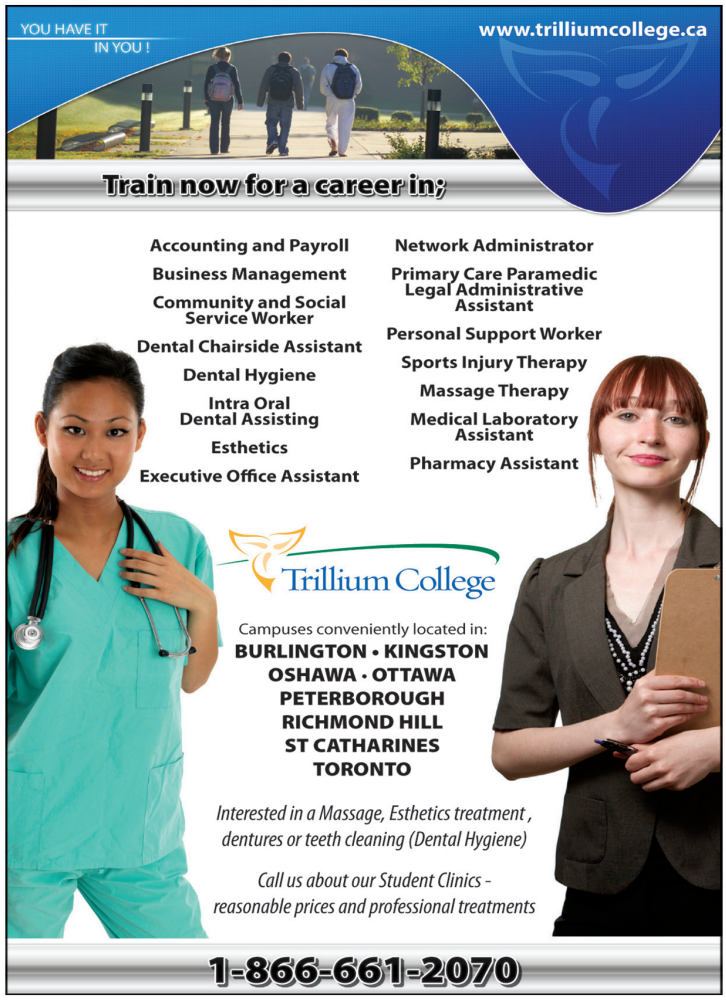

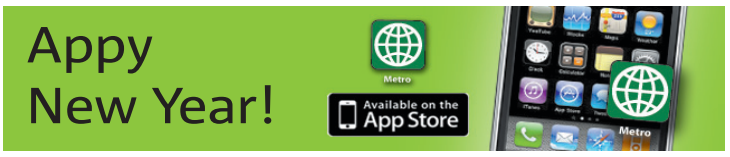

Professor wins award

ANDREW SZTEIN
for Metro Ottawa

Education doesn't end in the classroom for Kathy Mitchell, the Algonquin College professor who was the winner of the International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations' 2009 Humanitarian Award at last month's 20th annual symposium in Berlin.

Professor Kathy Mitchell won a humanitarian award last month.

Mitchell, who has been a professor for 22 years at the college, won the award for her work in Europe, increasing awareness for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis and Motor Neurone Disease.

"It was the most amazing honour in my career," said Mitchell. "The people who receive this honour in the past have devoted their entire careers to helping people with ALS."

The award is given to an individual from a non-scientific background who makes a contribution of international significance for people affected by the disease.

"I have worked in eastern Europe, primarily in Serbia," said Mitchell, who does her work during her vacation time from the college. "I worked in conjunction with a neurologist, Dr. Zorica Stevic. She's invited me to come and work together with her."

Mitchell has travelled to Serbia during the summer for the past five years at a neurological centre in Belgrade. Stevic and Mitchell have conducted several workshops to increase public and political awareness and knowledge about the disease, as well as patient comfort and autonomy. Much of her work is done with the Canadian embassy and the Serbian minister of health.

Commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease, ALS is a "devastating neurodegenerative disease," the ALS Society says on its website. "Those living with the disease become progressively paralyzed due to degeneration of the upper and lower motor neurons in the brain and spinal cord." ALS has been linked to other neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. Eighty per cent of patients die within two to five years of diagnosis.

As a professor in the faculty of health, public safety and community studies programs at the college, Mitchell said that her inspiration for her work with the disease was to "change healthcare so that patients benefit."

According to Mitchell, Canadian patients dealing with the disease "are very well served," but when she went to Serbia, Mitchell saw how little funding and support patients had to deal with the disease.

Five years of work later, "patients in Serbia have options that they never had before. They have options for nutritional and respiratory support. Their government is starting to be aware of the complex needs of these patients," said Mitchell.

"You have no idea about the impact you're going to make," said Mitchell. "I think the ability to make small changes that have lasting impact is really exciting."

Perfectionism costly: Study

ERIC EMIN WOOD
for Metro Canada

Elementary- and middle-school-aged perfectionists don't perform any better in class than their laid-back peers, according to a York University study.

"People have often equated perfectionism with being gifted, but there's increasing evidence that perfectionism in kids is associated with emotional problems" including anxiety and depression, says the study's co-author, Gordon Flett, a professor of psychology at York.

Flett and his colleagues surveyed fouth- and seventh-grade students from three streams — regular, intellectually gifted, and fine arts gifted.

The researchers measured the students' levels of perfectionism, emotional symptoms such as anxiety and sadness, and obtained test scores, which had been gathered when the students were in grades three and six.

"We found, first of all, that there was no indication gifted kids were more perfectionistic than non-gifted kids," Flett says. "But within each group, those who were higher in perfectionism, especially perceived pressure from others to be perfect, were reporting higher levels of anxiety and sadness."

Flett wasn't surprised by the results, but admits he expected a "performance advantage."

"There was a slight advantage in math, but by and large, perfectionism was not related to higher levels of achievement," he says. "And you had a cost in terms of sadness and anxiety."

He adds: "You can extrapolate that somebody who persists in their perfectionism, as they make their way through the school system and later in life, could be prone to ever-greater levels of anxiety and sadness."

Learning Curve is a special feature that focuses on education and student life.

Ottawa native a Rhodes scholar

NICK PEARCE PHOTO

Student Rosanna Nicol, 22, will be heading to the University of Oxford in September.

RICHARD WOODBURY
for Metro Canada

When Ottawa native Rosanna Nicol found out she was selected to receive a Rhodes scholarship, she had a hard time believing it.

"I think my reaction was no, no way," the 22-year-old University of King's College student says. She learned the news in late November only 90 minutes after her interview with the selection committee. She was relaxing with her roommates and hadn't even changed out of her interview clothes when the call came.

Nicol is one of 11 Canadians to receive this year's batch of Rhodes scholarships and will begin her studies in September. One of the best-known and prestigious in the world, the scholarship covers all fees as well as a stipend for living expenses for two (and possibly three) years of post-graduate studies at the University of Oxford in England.

Nicol is currently wrapping up her arts degree in history and economics at the Halifax-based university and plans on pursuing a masters in development. She's had an interest in refugee and sustainability issues for most of her life and already has an idea for her thesis.

"I'm pretty interested in socially responsible investing and how we could get capital flow to areas that need it, but within a market structure, rather than an aid framework," says Nicol.

She was hesitant at first about applying for the scholarship, but says the work involved with the application is what hooked her. "What drew me to it ... was how they really ask you in the documents you prepare for them to reflect on why you do all the stuff you do and to really question what your basic motivation is, and I hadn't really done that," says Nicol.

Shakespeare in Performance Series is a new course being offered at the University of Ottawa. It starts on Jan. 26.

Focus on Shakespeare at University of Ottawa

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

Almost everyone knows at least a little bit about the works of William Shakespeare, said Kathryn Prince, an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre at the University of Ottawa.

His plays have been performed somewhere around the world almost non-stop since they were first written, and from time to time, they've been turned into films, she said.

For people in Ottawa interested in getting to know Shakespeare a little better, Prince is teaching a new Shakespeare in Performance Series, offered through the university's Centre for Continuing Education.

The series is divided into four, two-hour workshops conducted on every other Tuesday evening starting on Jan. 26. Each session will focus on a different aspect of Shakespeare's works from the popular comedies, to the lesser-known histories.

The lecture series will introduce the variety of Shakespeare's plays and examine how they've been performed over the past 400 years.

The classes will make use of different media like performances and film clips.

Prince said the focus is to examine work as a performance piece from a playwright with an intimate knowledge of the theatre and a keen grasp of dramatic technique, not just as a work of literature.

The classes are open to members of the general public with all levels of knowledge about Shakespeare. Students in the class will not be expected to perform any of the plays, but they could if they wanted.

People taking the course do not receive a grade or credits. Sylvain LeDuc, the associate director of the Centre for Continuing Education, said it is purely for the pleasure of learning.

While the university has been offering general interest activities for decades, LeDuc said the number of courses they've offered to the general public has been increasing recently.

"One of the strategic objectives of the university is to get closer to the community," he said. "One way to do that it is to open the doors of the university by setting up activities that share the knowledge and expertise of our teaching staff."

LeDuc said those courses have to be subjects like Shakespeare, which are accessible to members of the public.

Giving birth to new ideas

The Cochrane Collaboration reviewed 21 studies involving 3,706 women and found that lying down significantly delays the process of giving birth. Researchers recommend that women in labour try to find the most comfortable position, other than lying flat. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Health & Beauty

Health in brief

KID'S MOVIES Characters in children's movies are wising up about personal safety, increasingly using seat belts, bike helmets and crosswalks, but many still aren't ideal role models, a U.S. government study found. The trend may reflect efforts by the U.S. federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other groups to get Hollywood to convey positive public health messages. But the study also shows these efforts haven't been universally endorsed, said lead study authors.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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As we make our way deeper into 2010, many of us cannot help but think we are just that much older. Baby boomers, in particular, may find it hard to believe that we have entered into another decade.

Perhaps a quick look in the mirror may confirm the passage of time. It may even have taken its toll on your smile! Quite literally, you may notice that your teeth appear to be worn down with age.

Even younger people may feel reluctant to smile as they do not want to display teeth that are not as attractive as they might like them to be. You want to do something to improve them…but who has the time to visit the dentist multiple times in order to get crowns or veneers put in place?

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Dr. George Parry
Dental Surgeon

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Dr. George Parry
- Dental Surgeon

Getting sick no joke

Canadians demanding zero tolerance for hospital infections

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

It's like a sick joke. You go to hospital for care and come out sicker than when you went in. But it's no laughing matter. Each year in Canada, between 8,000 and 12,000 people die of infections they acquired in hospital.

An important new Canadian study provides the first step in changing this grim pattern. A team of researchers at Queen's University in Kingston has proven scientifically that shared hospital rooms are a culprit in spreading superbugs.

"There is a very strong relationship between the number of roommates and the risk of each infection," said Dr. Dick Zoutman, an infection control expert at Kingston General Hospital and one of the authors of the study.

If you share a room with one other patient, your risk of getting a serious infection goes up by 10 per cent. And each roommate added raises your risk by another 10 per cent. So if you have five roommates, your risk of infection is up by 50 per cent, explained Zoutman.

The results were far more dramatic than the scientists expected.

"We found it quite shocking," Zoutman told Metro in a phone interview. "We didn't anticipate it would be that high. We went 'Wow!'"

They thought each roommate might boost risk by one per cent.

PHOTOS.COM

Your risk of catching an infection at a hospital increases by 10 per cent for every roomate you have there.

225,000

It's estimated that about 225,000 hospital-acquired infections occur in Canada each year.

Over a five-year period, Zoutman and his team studied whether patients in hospital for more than three days developed any of three serious infections. The infections were superbugs methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus (VRE), as well as Clostridium difficile, which causes diarrhea. These infections can be fatal.

Canadians, he said, are developing zero tolerance for hospital-acquired infection. "They are fed up."

While it may seem obvious that sharing hospital rooms means sharing illness, decision-makers needed proof before changes could be made, said Zoutman.

He added that the results are valuable because policy-makers who decide how hospitals will be designed now have evidence that private rooms are safer. They can justify spending the extra money.

The current system of dividing patient with curtains does not keep them safe from neighbours' infection.

"It has to be walls," said Zoutman.

Patients should have their own room and their own bathroom.

"The solution is designing safety and quality into hospital systems, so hospitals are safer. We want to have it that you can't transmit infections in hospital. My goal is zero. This is a step in the right direction."

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Campbell offers gluten-free
To meet the needs of those with gluten-sensitivity issues, Campbell Company of Canada introduced 13 gluten-free soups and broth this month. These new products can be easily spotted with their prominent 'gluten-free' labels located beside the item's nutrition panel. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

A good year for wine

Vintners and analysts predict that 2010 will be a very good year for wine lovers. Everybody is looking for a deal and I think that mentality is going to persist. We still have the '05 and the '06 vintages in the pipeline and that's a lot of wine," says Eric Titus, partner in Titus Vineyards in the Napa Valley. He also expects 2010 to be a better year for premium wine. "There's cautious optimism." No question 2009 was a tough year, especially for people making wines priced at $20 a bottle and over. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Puff perfection

Spinach and Parmesan Soufflés
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS:
- 2 tsp (10 mL) soft butter
- 1 lb (500 g) young spinach
- 1 slice white bread, crusts removed
- 2/3 cup (150 mL) sour cream
- 5 eggs, separated
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) grated Parmesan cheese
- Freshly grated nutmeg, to taste

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Lightly butter inside of four 1-cup (250-mL) ovenproof dishes. Tip washed spinach into dry pot with moisture left on leaves and stir over low heat until wilted. Leave to drain.
2. Process bread in blender to make fine crumbs. Add spinach to crumbs with half the sour cream and process for coarse purée. Add remaining sour cream and process until combined.
3. Add egg yolks to food processor with 3 Tbsp (45 mL) of grated Parmesan cheese. Season and add plenty of nutmeg, then process again to make smooth purée.
4. Whisk egg whites in large bowl until stiff. Tip spinach mixture onto egg whites and carefully fold with large metal spoon. Sprinkle half of remaining Parmesan inside prepared dishes and set on baking sheet. Spoon soufflé mixture into dishes. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan, then bake 15 minutes or until puffed and golden brown. Serve immediately.

Above: Spinach an Parmesan Soufflés.

Passion Fruit and Honey Zabaglione
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS:
- 4 ripe passion fruits
- 3 Tbsp (45 mL) clear honey
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 tsp (10 mL) lemon juice

METHOD
1. Cut each fruit in half and scoop out pulp and seeds into sieve set over large heatproof bowl. Sieve fruit thoroughly, then trickle 1 Tbsp (15 mL) boiling water over seed mixture in sieve and scrape again with spoon. Scrape any pulp from underneath sieve into bowl too. Discard seeds.
2. Half-fill pot with boiling water and heat to simmering point. Put honey, egg yolks and lemon juice into bowl with passion fruit juice and whisk well with electric mixer. Set bowl over pot of hot water and continue to whisk until mixture is pale and thick, and holds trail when beaters are lifted out. This takes about 10 minutes. Keep water barely simmering – do not let it bubble too fiercely or eggs will cook and separate.
3. Remove bowl from pot and continue to whisk 1 minute. Spoon, ladle or pour mixture into four small glasses. Serve immediately.

Passion Fruit and Honey Zabaglione.

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Searching out budget bottles

LiquidAssets

Whoever said "life's too short to drink cheap wine" never received one of my post-holiday credit card bills. While my neighbour is having issues letting go of his outdoor light display; Christmas is over and the reality of how much I spent is starting to sink in fast.

It seems to be the same for most of you because my email in-box is full of requests for budget conscious bottles that can deliver the goods without costing a small fortune.

Thanks to an ugly exchange rate, Californian wines have historically been higher-priced here in Canada. Things have been balancing out over the last few years and there are tasty deals to be had from The Golden State.

Though blended from different vintages, the wines from Barefoot Cellars are all decent drops with the **Sauvignon Blanc** ($9.95 - $11.99) getting my vote for one of the smoothest, freshest whites under $12. It's a great match for salads, seafood and dishes with a bit of heat.

Over in Italy, **Farnese's 2008 Sangiovese** ($7.55 - $10.99) is a steal from the Farneto Valley in Abruzzi. Full of ripe cherry, plum and cedar wood, it's a price-fighting red perfect with rigatoni and mushroom topped pizza.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

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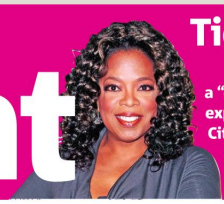
EOE

relationship management

Cowell out of Idol

Simon Cowell, the acerbic Brit who has helped give American Idol some of its sharpest — and nastiest — moments, will leave the popular singing show after this season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Entertainment



Ticket to Oprah

The February issue of O features a "golden ticket" sweepstakes for an expenses-paid weekend in New York City to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the magazine and to meet Oprah Winfrey. PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Mila's mature act

Actress opts for serious role in Book of Eli

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

With her latest movie, Mila Kunis may finally fulfill her destiny.

Having begun acting professionally at age nine, the Ukraine-born beauty rose to fame playing goofy comedy on television's That '70s Show. Now with the dystopian drama The Book of Eli, she shares company with such an esteemed thespian as Denzel Washington — a step in the right direction.

"He's a very powerful man," said Kunis during a recent interview. "At this point in my career I like to work with people that I admire and people I respect and can learn from and an opportunity to work with Denzel Washington, you can't really pass it up."

"An opportunity to work with Denzel Washington, you can't really pass it up."
Mila Kunis

In the movie, Kunis joins Washington as a post-apocalyptic survivor protecting a sacred book as he seeks to fulfill its destiny in the West. It's a much more mature role for Kunis who, until relatively recently, didn't take her job seriously.

"It was just a conscious decision that this is what I want to do with my life," said Kunis. "I looked at it as something fun. I worked because I was able to work and then when I was twenty I was like, 'OK, this is going to be my career so I'm going to make smart choices and I'm going to go about it as a career versus just a fun thing on the side.'"

The Book of Eli hits theatres on Friday

While she admits luck had a lot to do with her success, Kunis selects her parts more carefully now but she remains self-effacing when it comes to being realistic about the nature of showbiz.

"I'd like to think I could do it for the rest of my life but tomorrow nobody might want to hire me and that'd be the end of it."

In the meantime, audiences will see Kunis in The Book of Eli (hitting theatres Friday) as well as two other films releasing this year. Plus, fans can always catch her voicing the animated character of Meg on TV's The Family Guy — perhaps surprisingly her most famous role.

"If I open my mouth and I'm in public, that's all it takes," laughed Kunis. "If I be quiet, I'm OK. It's just when I talk that people are like, 'Hey it's Meg!'"

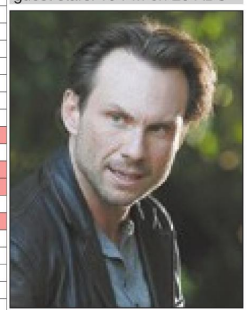
That '70s Show star Mila Kunis joins Denzel Washington in Book of Eli.

primetime — 1/12/10

PT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
cable variety	265	353	2	TVO	Great Canadian Parks		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Criminal Justice (N)		Story of Maths		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	NCIS "Flesh and Blood"		NCIS: Los Angeles (N)		The Good Wife (N)		News Hour
	-	-	5	SRC	Virginie (SC)	La Facture	Providence (HDTV) (N) (SC)		Trauma (HDTV) (N) (SC)		Le Téléjournal Nouvelles. (SC)		La Zone (SC)
	209	342	6	CHRO	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	*The Matrix Reloaded* ★★★ (2003, Science Fiction) Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss.						Comedy Now
	196	311	7	CTV	etalk	Access H.	American Idol The audition process begins in Boston. (N)				Law & Order: Special Victims		CTV News
	208	303	8	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	22 Minutes (N)	Kids in-Hall	Comedy	CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	The Biggest Loser Dr. Huizenga delivers sobering news.				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	117	713	10	TVA	La Fièvre de la danse (SC)		Caméra café	Taxi 0-22 (SC)	La Promesse (HDTV) (N) (SC)		TVA nouvelles	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
	-	-	11	QS	Touche pas à mon fils		Dirty Sexy Money (SC)		Pratique privée (N) (SC)		Guerre clans	L'Attaque à 5	À comm
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama		Artisans du changement		*Sous le sable* ★★★ (2000, Drame) Charlotte Rampling.				Facteur
	-	362	13	CBS	The Insider (N)	Judge Brown	NCIS "Flesh and Blood"		NCIS: Los Angeles (N)		The Good Wife (N)		Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: Special Victims		The Biggest Loser Dr. Huizenga delivers sobering news.				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Office	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Metropia
	218	345	18	CHCH	*The Neverending Story* ★★★ (1984, Fantasy) Barret Oliver.				*Kiss the Girls* ★★ (1997, Suspense) Morgan Freeman.				News at 11 (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	Action News	Entertainment	Scrubs	Better Off Ted	Scrubs	Better Off Ted	the forgotten (HDTV) (N)		News
	512	396	24	CPAC	(5) Dossier public (SC)		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Tête-à-tête	Podium
	651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	American Idol The audition process begins in Boston. (N)				FOX 2 News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Help Wanted	Nova (N)		Independent Lens Senior citizen chorus. (N)				Charlie Rose
	205	312	104	CTV	etalk	Access H.	American Idol The audition process begins in Boston. (N)				Law & Order: Special Victims		CTV News
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	NHL Hockey Ottawa Senators at Atlanta Thrashers. (HDTV) (Live)					Overtime	Sportsnet Connected		Prime Time
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes (SC)		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	NHL Hockey New Jersey Devils at New York Rangers. (HDTV) (Live)					SportsCentre		That's Hockey!	SportsCentre
	410	403	52	SCR	Cabby Unlimit	Score Today	Court Cuts	NBA Basketball Los Angeles Lakers at San Antonio Spurs. (Live)					Score Now
	411	457	56	OLN	Ghost Hunters		Destination Truth		Operate-Repo	Operate-Repo	Ghost Hunters		Destin. Truth
	417	406	59	SC	Pass Time	NASCAR Hub	Monster Jam (HDTV)		Super Bikes!	Super Bikes!	Dangerous Drives (HDTV)		Pass Time
family	554	544	48	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	557	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	Suite Life	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	551	542	65	YTV	iCarly	Fries That?	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz (N)	To Be Indie	Prank Patrol
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		I Want to Work for Diddy		Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	615	520	31	A&E	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Psychic Kids: Paranormal		Paranormal State (N)		Ghost Stories
	628	584	32	SPKE	Ultimate Knockouts 7 (HDTV)		UFC Unleashed (HDTV) (N)		Entourage	Entourage	Ultimate Knockouts 7 (HDTV)		Entourage
	521	560	34	TLC	Little Couple	Little Couple	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	Happy Family	Happy Family	Little Couple	Little Couple	Cake Boss
	145	761	35	TV5	Zoom animal		Découvrir le monde		Partir autrement		ADN	Nouva	TV5 Le Journal
	616	521	39	SHO	Relic Hunter		*I Know What I Saw* (2007, Suspense) Beverley Mitchell.				Drop Dead Diva (N)		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	Ferron: Girl on a Road		Live at the Rehearsal Hall		Liza With a Z: Concert		Bravonews	Side-Dick Dale	Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	License to Drill "Hard Rock"		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	This Is It
	601	562	45	SLC	Rich Poor	Rich Poor	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham	Blue Collar TV	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: SVU		*The Alamo* ★★ (2004, War), Jason Patric		
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Million Dollar Listing (N)		Bang, Buck	Genevieve	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Lost		Medium "Baby Fever"		Fringe		Stargate SG-1
	581	566	53	MTV	Peak Season	After	Cribs	Parent Control	16 and Pregnant "Maci"		Teen Mom (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Rescue Ink		Dog Whisperer		End of Leash	Last 10	Tube Tales
	522	506	55	HIS	Ancient Discoveries		Cities of the Underworld		Pawn Stars (N)	Pawn Stars (N)	Ancients Behaving Badly		Crime Stories
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies (HDTV)		Ondes de choc		Images-chocs		Gangland (HDTV) (SC)		Destr Expr
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Hallelujah!	When I Laugh	Quantum Leap		Unscripted (N)	Benmergui-Isr	Poltergeist
	602	567	62	W	Supernanny		Dine With Me	Grocery Bag	Beauty	Style by Jury	How to Look Good Naked		Beauty
	269	350	70	APTN	Fish Out of	Mixed Blessing	Cashing In	Rabbit Fall	*Gunslinger's Revenge* ★★ (1998, Western), Harvey Keitel				Fish Out of
	621	527	71	TLK	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (HDTV)		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Ricardo	Exotic	Dinner: Impossible (N)		The F Word (N)		Good Eats	Good Eats	Restaurant

critics' corner

the forgotten
An unidentified man found dead inside a seepage pit leads Alex (Christian Slater) and the team into the world of medical trials. They discover the victim was a recently naturalized citizen who signed up to become a medical guinea pig to earn enough money to bring his family to America in the new episode "Patient John." Susan Ruttan guest stars. 10 PM on 20 ABC



NCIS: Los Angeles
The murder of a recently released convict forces Callen to go undercover using an old alias, while Sam and the team track him from a distance. Linda Hunt, Peter Cambor and Daniela Ruah also star in the new episode "Past Lives." 9 PM on 13 CBS 3 GTV

The Good Wife
After a popular high-school quarterback dies of an overdose of painkillers, Alicia represents the physician who prescribed the medication. At home, Alicia and the kids deal with some bad news, and she sets Peter's blood boiling in the new episode "Painkiller." 10 PM on 13 CBS 3 GTVv

Twilight star joins Globe presenters

AWARDS A werewolf is coming to the Golden Globe Awards. Twilight star Taylor Lautner will be among the presenters at Sunday's ceremony, along with Milk star Josh Brolin and Saturday Night Live alum Amy Poehler. Ricky Gervais will host the 67th annual awards, which will be presented at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The show will air live on NBC.

Hasselhoff out, Mandel in

JUDGE Howie Mandel is replacing David Hasselhoff as one of the judges on NBC's America's Got Talent. NBC executives confirmed the move Sunday. Mandel, who has been host of NBC's Deal or No Deal, will be teamed with returning hosts Sharon Osbourne and Piers Morgan. America's Got Talent is one of the most popular series on TV in the summertime. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HollywoodRants

Steve Gow

Read the blog at metronews.ca/hollywoodrants

Mel sticks up for Tiger

Mel Gibson is teed off over the treatment of disgraced golfer Tiger Woods. "I feel sorry for Tiger Woods," the actor, 54, tells Britain's Daily Mail. "Why are we talking about this when we're sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan?" USMAGAZINE.COM

Game over for Pallett

Polaris Music Prize winner retires Final Fantasy name

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Heartland is the new album from Polaris Music Prize winner Owen Pallett, formerly Final Fantasy.

CAM LINDSAY
for Metro Canada

With less than a month to go before he released his highly anticipated third album, Toronto musician Owen Pallett surprised many when he abandoned his musical moniker, Final Fantasy.

Owen Pallett's Heartland is available today

Anyone aware of the famous video game of the same name was wondering when that day would come, including Pallett himself. In December he gave in and retired the name.

"(The game's developer Square Enix) were OK with me using it but basically what it came down to was they had to legally step in and say something because that's how trademark laws work," Pallett tells Metro in a recent interview from Brooklyn on a recent Saturday morning.

The name change means his new album Heartland will be credited to Owen Pallett. However, that wasn't his first choice.

"I had a secondary band name in mind," he explains. "But, when the day came, I couldn't bite the bullet and say, 'I'm gonna change my name to this.' The record was about to come out and I was like, 'It's too much, it's too soon!'"

The name, in case you're wondering, was Skylord. "I thought it was a great band name," he explains, "but you can't just change your name to Skylord right before your album comes out." He's got a point.

"I wanted to make an album where I could play all these songs live using my looping rig. I also wanted it to be this orchestral score that I could put in front of an orchestra and just have them go to it." Owen Pallett

Pallett won the inaugural Polaris Music Prize in 2006 for his second album, He Poos Clouds, but don't be surprised if Heartland is the frontrunner for the Prize once again in September. Pallett has created a dense and absorbing epic filled with obscure poetry and grandiose orchestration.

"I wanted to make an album where I could play all these songs live using my looping rig," he explains. "I also wanted it to be this orchestral score that I could put in front of an orchestra and just have them go to it."

Within the intricate arrangements also lies an endearing bit of prose.

"This record has this highfalutin concept attached to it, but it's really not meant to be high concept. It's just a record about a relationship sung from the perspective of the sweetheart, and in this case that's a farmer named Lewis who is singing songs to me, who is the one singing the song," he says with a giggle.

"(Lewis) isn't meant to be a metaphor for anything, he's more of a composite of these things that I'm interested in," he adds. "Like in the same way somebody else likes to sing about fat bottomed girls, I'm singing about a sexy farmer."

In concert

- Owen Pallett plays the Blacksheep Inn in Wakefield, Que., on Feb. 18 & 19 and Theatre Outremont in Montreal on Feb. 20.

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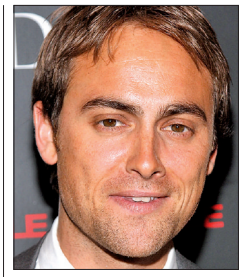

Stuart Townsend

Townsend out, Dallas in for Thor film

CASTING Stuart Townsend has departed Marvel Comics' movie adaptation of Thor because of creative differences, according to sources close to the production.

Townsend had been cast as Fandral, an ally of Norse god Thor. He was replaced by Joshua Dallas, according to the two sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak on the record.

The cast change came as production was about to begin. Shooting starts this week on the movie directed by Kenneth Branagh.

Irish actor Townsend, 37, best known as the boyfriend of Academy Award winner Charlize Theron, starred in Queen of the Damned. He had been cast as Aragorn in The Lord of the Rings trilogy but was replaced at the last minute by Viggo Mortensen.

Dallas appears in George Lucas' upcoming Tuskagee Airmen drama Red Tails.

Thor stars Chris Hemsworth in the title role, a warrior cast down to Earth to live among mortals as punishment for his reckless actions, which rekindled an ancient war.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DVD picks

The Hurt Locker

Director: Kathryn Bigelow

JUST WHEN YOU think the battle of Iraq war dramas has been fought and lost, along comes one that demands to be seen — if you can handle the raging adrenaline.

Kathryn Bigelow's latest testosterone drama strips the Iraqi conflict of politics and brings it right down to the garbage-strewn pavement, where lives are saved through skill and nerve but lost through bad luck and malevolence.

The film follows the men of Bravo Company, the elite U.S. army unit tasked with defusing bombs left on Baghdad streets by increasingly violent and determined insurgents.

The bomb-removal boys have robots and shrapnel-resistant suits at their disposal, but they can't stop every blast — as we see with devastating impact early on.

The job ultimately comes down to playing hunches, keeping your cool and staying ever vigilant. If the IED (improvised explosive device) doesn't get you, the sniper hiding on a nearby rooftop just might.

Gutsy and gung-ho but new to Bravo is a sergeant named James (Jeremy Renner, in a breakout role), a reckless cowboy who has disarmed 873 bombs but is one short fuse away from being blown to kingdom come. He reminds himself of this with a collection of detonators he keeps under his bed.

His subordinates Sanborn (Anthony Mackie) and Eldridge (Brian Geraghty) are shocked by his methods and not shy about saying so, but are loyal to task and team. This is no message movie, yet insights abound.

Bigelow knows the male mind and she's an ace at action, as she's demonstrated before in films like Point Break and Strange Days. Now she can add titan of suspense to her laurels — and there's strong buzz for Oscar nominations, including Best Picture and Best Director.

If you can sit through The Hurt Locker without your heart nearly pounding through your chest, you must be made of granite. Peter Howell/for Metro Canada

On the web

- To read our review of the movie Moon, visit metronews.ca/movies.

Pussycat on the prowl

Pussycat Dolls singer Nicole Scherzinger is single again, usmagazine.com reports. She and 2008 Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton have announced that they have split after two years. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

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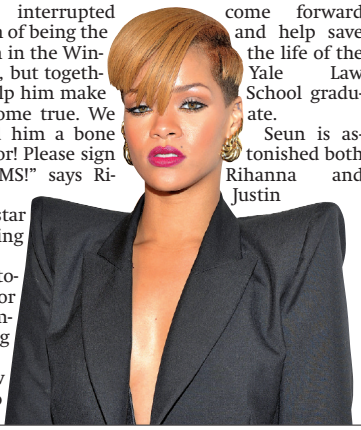
Is Nightingale her last name?

R&B'S FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE IN SHINING ARMOUR Rihanna is seeking a donor for an Olympic hopeful battling leukemia, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer — who received a touching letter from 26-year-old Seun Adebiyi, a Nigerian athlete who had hoped to compete in the 2014 Winter Games in skeleton sledding, but was diagnosed with Leukemia during training — has promised to do everything she can to raise awareness of his condition and find him a bone marrow donor.

"Leukemia interrupted Seun's dream of being the first Nigerian in the Winter Olympics, but together we can help him make his dream come true. We need to find him a bone marrow donor! Please sign up with DKMS!" says Rihanna.



The pop star is working alongside Grey's Anatomy actor Justin Chambers in asking potential bone marrow donors to come forward and help save the life of the Yale Law School graduate.

Seun is astonished both Rihanna and Justin have taken the time to help him.

"I am deeply touched by their plea for donors, not just for me, but for others as well. Their voices are so powerful and it encourages me how they used their influence to raise awareness about this important issue. That was incredible," he says. Rihanna previously made successful public pleas both last year and in 2008 to help six-year-old Jasmina Anema and 43-year-old Lisa Flynn find bone marrow transplants.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

"Gays get a good rap! The story is not only moving but also hilarious."

New York Post

That's **their** viewpoint. What's yours?

BASH'd! A Gay Rap Opera
Written and Performed by
Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow
Music by Aaron Macri
Directed by Ron Jenkins
January 12 – 31, 2010

Media partner: metro Do it daily.

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Tila Tequila denied a teary-eyed graveside goodbye?

NO FOND FAREWELL Tila Tequila has not been invited to her purported fiancé Casey Johnson's funeral, set for this week, usmagazine.com reports.

A source close to the MTV reality star tells Us, "She wants so badly to go to the funeral, but nobody will give her the details or tell her anything. She is extremely frustrated."

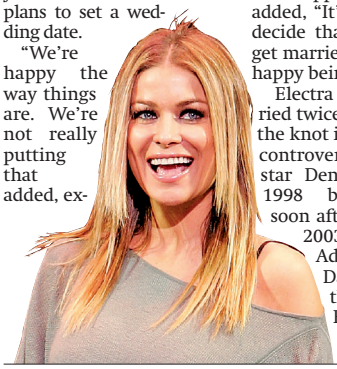
Over the weekend, Tila told E! News, "I don't want to talk about the funeral. I wasn't allowed to go, and I am so upset. I can't sleep, and I am on suicide watch."

Tequila has been engaged in a war of words with friends of Johnson, who accuse the reality star of using the baby-oil heiress for media attention. Tequila has been firing back, saying that Johnson's family and friends never cared about her. Over the weekend, she Tweeted, "The family cut Casey out for five years! They knew nothing about her except that she was sad ... until she met me. LESBIAN MARRIAGE. Not accepted."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Marriage is one option ... divorce seems to be another

ONLY FOOLS RUSH IN Carmen Electra is in no rush to get married, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The former Baywatch actress has been engaged to Otep rocker Rob Patterson for almost two years but still has no plans to set a wedding date.



"We're happy the way things are. We're not really putting that added, extra pressure on the relationship," she said.

Although Electra, 37, is no hurry to walk down the aisle with the former Korn rocker, the brunette beauty insists a wedding could still happen one day. She added, "It's possible. If we decide that, then we will get married, but we're just happy being together.'

Electra has been married twice before. She tied the knot in Las Vegas with controversial basketball star Dennis Rodman in 1998 before splitting soon after. In November 2003, she wed Jane's Addiction guitarist Dave Navarro, but they divorced in February 2007.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Lohan can't get (use?) a break

(UN)LUCK BE A LADY Lindsay Lohan is having more car trouble, only this time she wasn't the one driving. The actress' BMW reportedly struck a photographer early Sunday morning while pulling away from the Hotel Cafe nightclub, according to TMZ.

Lohan was reportedly a passenger at the time, and it was her assistant that reported the incident. The photographer was not taken to the hospital, but he is reportedly threatening to sue Lohan.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

METRO WORLD NEWS

Katy Perry is craving American burgers while in India, Sandra Bernhard is ecstatic about her vacuum purchase and Tyrese Gibson parties all night but has nothing to show for it.

• @katyperry Quick someone send me a pic of a double double animal style from In N Out. I'm dying over heeeeeere.

• @SandraBernhard we are in love with our new DYSON DC 25 with the rolling ball honey the glamor that new vacuum has brought into the house is shocking!

• @Tyrese4ReaL It's crazy to be around all that action and end up alone... Dammit I should of got a few #'s waaay too many to focus on!

Appy New Year!

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Wednesday Flurries 40% -8° / -9°
Thursday Flurries 40% -2°/ -10°

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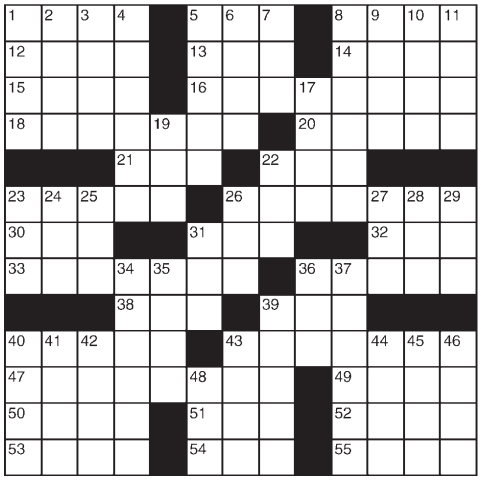
Take Five



Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

4			9	6				1
	8					6	9	
	9			1	7			4
					6			8
		2				7		
9			2					
3			6	7			5	
	5	1					8	
7				5	3			2

ACROSS

1 — mater
5 Thither
8 Astronomical bear
12 Spring wind?
13 Praise in verse
14 Bosc, e.g.
15 Color quality
16 "A Streetcar Named Desire" surname
18 Captain
20 Gave as an example
21 Fellows
22 Fellows
23 Lifting apparatus
26 Soaking in the sun
30 Feedbag morsel
31 "— the ramparts ..."
32 Compete
33 "Tobacco Road" author Caldwell
36 Bloodhound's clue
38 Suffix with robot
39 Dead heat
40 Supermarket section
43 Providing traction
47 Like beauty, they say
49 Rescue
50 Baserunner's goal
51 Bikini half
52 Verve
53 Oklahoma city
54 Dickens pseudonym
55 Transmitted

DOWN

1 Performances
2 Appearance
3 Revealing skirt
4 Hebrew letters
5 Burdens for oxen
6 Stench
7 Fresh
8 Telecom channel to a satellite
9 Repose
10 Benefit
11 Saharan
17 "Bullets" at the poker table
19 Favorite
22 Scratch
23 Weeding tool
24 Rowing tool
25 "Monty Python" opener
26 Spelling contest
27 "— got it!"
28 Zero
29 Solidify
31 Switch positions
34 Baked, as pottery
35 On the rocks
36 Transgression
37 Disarrays
39 November birthstone
40 Arthur of tennis
41 Object of worship (Var.)
42 California valley
43 Pianist Peter
44 Hardy cabbage
45 Terrible guy?
46 Fender bender
48 Recede

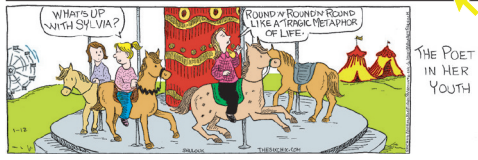
PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

A	V	E	C		T	S	P		A	B	E	D			
D	I	V	A		R	U	E		C	A	R	E			
A	V	I	V		A	P	P	L	E	P	I	E			
M	A	L	I	B	U		S	E	T	T	E	R			
			A	I	M	S		I	I	I					
A	P	P	R	O	A	C	H		C	Z	A	R			
L	E	A		S	T	O	O	P		E	N	E			
P	A	N	T		A	P	P	E	N	D	I	X			
			P	H	I		E	E	R	O					
L	A	I	R	D	S		L	I	G	H	T	S			
A	P	P	O	S	I	T	E		O	A	H	U			
K	E	E	N		L	I	S		O	T	I	C			
E	S	S	E		O	P	S		D	E	S	K			

6	9	5	3	7	8	1	4	2
1	8	3	5	2	4	9	6	7
2	4	7	1	6	9	3	5	8
8	7	6	9	4	1	5	2	3
4	1	2	6	3	5	8	7	9
5	3	9	2	8	7	4	1	6
3	6	8	4	1	2	7	9	5
9	2	4	7	5	3	6	8	1
7	5	1	8	9	6	2	3	4

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Peppered Beef with Pecans

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb (500 g) lean steak
2 tsp (10 ml) black peppercorns
3/4 cup (175 ml) pecan halves
2 tbsp (25 ml) olive oil
2 tsp (10 ml) butter
1 onion, thinly sliced
3/4 lb (375 g) button mushrooms, sliced
4 tbsp (60 ml) brandy
2/3 cup (150 ml) sour cream
3 oz (90 g) arugula

METHOD:

1. Slice steak into thin strips, trimming excess fat. Lightly crush peppercorns using mortar and pestle and put into large bowl. Toss steak strips with peppercorns.
2. Put pecans in large, dry pan and toast over medium-high heat, tossing regularly, 2-3 minutes. Chop roughly and set aside.
3. Heat 1 tbsp (15 ml) oil with butter in pan and stir-fry onion over medium heat to soften slightly. Add mushrooms and cook over high heat until lightly softened. Add salt to taste.
4. Remove mushrooms and onions from pan and put onto plate. Add remaining oil to pan and stir-fry steak strips over fairly high heat for 2-3 minutes.
5. Add brandy and boil 30 seconds. Return onions and mushrooms to pan and stir in sour cream. Heat until blended. Add arugula and stir until wilted, then sprinkle over pecans and serve immediately.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Unexpected changes are likely, so be ready for them and don't hesitate to adapt if the situation requires it.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
This should be a lucky day for you, the kind of day when even the darkest of clouds have a silver lining.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
It is likely that you will clash with someone whose outlook on life is about as different to your own as it is possible to get.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Having a good idea is one thing, making it work is quite another, and no matter how remarkable the thoughts that pass through your head today.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
Your potential may be infinite but you still need to be selective when it comes to your activities.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Others may look at you and think you are lazy because you are not running around in a frenzy like everyone else.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Do not — repeat, not — agree to do other people's tasks for them today. Yes, it's nice to be helpful but the planets warn if you against it.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
You know what you want so why are you hesitating? It's because on other occasions when you acted too quickly something bad happened.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Someone will be offended by your outspoken opinions today but you don't care about that. Jupiter, your ruler, makes you feel like you are protected.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
With one group pulling you in one direction and another group pulling you in the opposite direction there is a danger you might come apart.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
Other people will make all sorts of promises but if you expect those promises to be kept you are going to be disappointed.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
If something no longer works for you the way it once did then get rid of it, despite any sentimental attachment.

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$1119
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $312

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Feb. 7, 21 & Mar. 7 • 1 wk.
$1349
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $212
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

MEXICO

Los Cabos via Toronto

Barceló Los Cabos Palace Deluxe • 5★
All-Inclusive • Junior suite
Feb. 6, 20 & 27 • 1 wk.
$1099
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $285

Gran Bahia Principe Punta Cana • 5★
All-Inclusive • Junior suite
Jan. 28 • 1 wk.
$1319
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $312

Occidental Royal Hideaway Ensenachos • 5★
All-Inclusive
Royal Hideaway Spa
Feb. 7, 21 & Mar. 7 • 1 wk.
PRIVILEGES
$1469
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $212
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

BAHAMAS

Nassau via Toronto

Breezes Resort Bahamas • 3★
Super-Inclusive
Deluxe garden view rm.
Mar. 8 & 9 • 3 nts.
$1129
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $96

JAMAICA

Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort & Spa • 4 1/2★
All-Inclusive
Junior suite supersaver
Feb. 20 • 1 wk.
$1399
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $266

COSTA RICA

Liberia via Toronto

Occidental Grand Papagayo • 4 1/2★
All-Inclusive • Deluxe rm.
Feb. 4, 11, 18 & 25 • 1 wk.
$1569
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $204
Departure tax: 26 USD cash, paid locally

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Barkston Gardens • 3 1/2★
Breakfast
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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $392

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$999
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $266

Gran Bahia Principe Jamaica • 4 1/2★
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Junior suite
Jan. 23 & 30 • 1 wk.
PRIVILEGES
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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $266

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